

hearing on the use of data matching to improve customer service, increase program integrity, and achieve taxpayer savings. We received testimony in support of consistent data standards that are non-proprietary and promote the interoperability of data across various information technology platforms, including the range of State legacy systems. The hearing confirmed that not only are programs within the Subcommittee's jurisdiction in silos, but so are the accompanying data.

Applying the provisions of the Standard DATA Act across multiple programs will advance the longer-term goal of allowing data both within and across all Federal assistance programs to operate more efficiently—first by establishing standard elements for individual items of information, and second by defining, in predictable ways, how those elements relate to one another. These standardization activities will promote transparency, flexibility, and consistency across various information technology platforms established by Federal and State agencies.

This bill continues the efforts begun in the bipartisan, bicameral Child and Family Services Extension and Enhancement Act of 2011, which was our first effort at requiring a human services program to implement standard data elements and reporting. President Obama signed that bill into law on September 30, 2011.

Improved data standards will help increase the efficiency of data exchanges to use and reuse data within and across programs. That will allow States to automate the exchange of claimant data on work and benefit receipt, reducing delays and minimizing improper payments. It will also help to automate application forms by pre-populating them with reliable and verified data, which can reduce the manual burden on staff and allow them more time to engage beneficiaries, all while reducing error. That's good for program beneficiaries and taxpayers at the same time.

I thank my colleagues for co-sponsoring this important legislation, starting with Mr. DOGGETT, the Ranking Member on the Human Resources Subcommittee, as well as Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. HERGER, Mr. NUNES, Mr. TIBERI, Mr. REICHERT, Mr. BOUSTANY, Mr. PRICE of Georgia, Ms. JENKINS, Mr. PAULSEN, Mr. MARCHANT, Mr. BERG, Mrs. BLACK, and Mr. REED.

I also want to thank Oversight and Government Reform Committee Chairman ISSA and the Technology, Information Policy, Intergovernmental Relations and Procurement Reform Subcommittee Chairman LANKFORD for co-sponsoring this bill, as well as for their support and leadership on the larger effort to improve data reporting transparency.

I invite all Members to join us in supporting this important legislation designed to improve the integrity of the benefit programs millions of Americans access today, and ensure that taxpayer funds are properly spent.

INTRODUCING THE FOSTER CHILDREN OPPORTUNITY ACT

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 3, 2011

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce legislation to ensure that thousands of

abused and neglected immigrant children in our foster care system have the opportunity to overcome their abuse and become successful adults.

Every year, hundreds and perhaps thousands of abused and neglected children leave the child welfare system and become illegal immigrants through no fault of their own. Under a law passed by Congress in 1990 immigrant foster youth are able to gain legal status. This status, known as Special Immigrant Juvenile Status (SIJS), is available if a child is in the foster care system, under 21, and cannot be safely reunified with their family or returned to their country of origin.

SIJS ensures that the child has a recognized legal status and a pathway to becoming a citizen. After a young person leaves foster care, they are not eligible for SIJS. Unfortunately, many youth and many caseworkers are unaware of SIJS or how to apply. As a consequence, potentially eligible youth "age out" of the foster care system every year without a legal status. After being cared for by our child welfare system because they were victims of abuse and neglect, these young people then leave the system and face the threat of deportation and lack access to the supports other transitioning foster youth rely upon. My office has heard from young people who aged out of the system and others who were adopted who never heard of SIJS. These youth were forced into the underground economy, face exploitation, and live in constant fear of being deported to a country they don't know.

To fix this problem, the Foster Children Opportunity Act will require that all children in the foster care system be screened for SIJS eligibility and other forms of immigration relief. It also requires that they be assisted in applying for the status. Child welfare agencies and juvenile courts will be provided with technical assistance and additional resources to make this happen. In addition, my legislation will guarantee that youth who obtain SIJS have access to the same benefits, such as student loans, Medicaid, and food stamps that support other former foster youth as they make the transition to adulthood.

My bill will not change current immigration law. Nor will it result in any adults who have engaged in illegal behavior from gaining legal status because a person with SIJS cannot act as a sponsor for any family members. The Foster Children Opportunity Act has nothing to do with the fight over immigration reform. It is simply about fulfilling our responsibility to all abused and neglected children and providing these youth with a fighting chance to succeed. I encourage all my colleagues to join me in supporting this simple legislation that will improve the lives of thousands of vulnerable children.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE 65TH AN- NIVERSARY OF SACRAMENTO MUNICIPAL UTILITY DISTRICT

HON. DORIS O. MATSUI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 3, 2011

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Sacramento Municipal Utility District (SMUD), as the organization celebrates its 65th anniversary. It is a great pleas-

ure to recognize SMUD's dedication in keeping electricity rates affordable, providing customers with energy-efficient options, and supporting the deployment of renewable power. As SMUD's customers and employees gather to celebrate this milestone, I ask all my colleagues to join me in honoring the key role the organization plays in the Sacramento region.

SMUD was formed in 1946. In response to overpriced electricity, Sacramento voters opted to create a municipal utility district that would provide them with an alternative to investor owned power companies. This led to the formation of SMUD, a public utility company that measures success by how much money stays within the community through low rates, rather than going out to stockholders. SMUD has proven to be a success as their electricity rates are among the lowest in the state of California.

Over the last 65 years, SMUD has become the nation's sixth-largest public electric utility, serving nearly 600,000 customers and a population of 1.4 million. Residential and business customer satisfaction surveys consistently rank SMUD as the top provider of electricity in California, as well as one of the best in the nation.

SMUD is regarded across the nation as a leader in renewable energy and energy efficiency. In 2010, SMUD became the state's first large utility to have 20 percent of its power from renewable resources. The figure has since climbed to 24 percent and is expected to reach the state mandated 33 percent mark by 2020. Taking into account the hydroelectricity generated in SMUD's Upper American River Project, nearly 50 percent of SMUD's power comes from non-carbon resources. SMUD's energy efficiency programs have helped customers reduce their carbon dioxide emission by over 3 million tons since 1987. SMUD has also provided more than \$495 million in energy efficiency loans since 1990.

SMUD is led by a forward thinking Board of Directors, an energetic executive team, and 2,000 hard working employees. They are united in their desire to offer the Sacramento Region affordable power and an excellent customer experience.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to pay tribute to Sacramento Municipal Utility District and their continuous commitment to providing the Sacramento Region with access to energy efficient programs, more energy choices, and affordable electricity. SMUD has contributed an immense amount to making Sacramento a better place to live, work, and do business. As SMUD's General Manager John DiStasio, Board President Renee Taylor, and others gather together to celebrate the organization's 65th anniversary, I ask all my colleagues to join me in honoring their outstanding work in providing the community with affordable electricity.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JOE COURTNEY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 3, 2011

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, I regret that I was unable to attend votes on Tuesday, November 1, 2011 as I was attending to needs

in my district resulting from the unprecedented snow storm that hit Connecticut this past weekend. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall 816, reaffirming "In God We Trust" as the official motto of the United States, and "yea" on rollcall vote 817, on passage of the Kate Puzey Peace Corps Volunteer Protection Act of 2011.

HONORING JAMES CHARLES ROBBINS OF LAKE COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 3, 2011

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the tremendous public service of Mr. James Charles Robbins, who served honorably and admirably for 44 years as a fireman, 37 of which were as a fire chief of the Lucerne Volunteer Fire Department in Clearlake Oaks, California.

In addition to his duties with the Fire Department, Chief Robbins worked with the Lucerne Business Association and held the title of the "Moose" of Clearlake Oaks. Chief Robbins coached football and baseball for youth and high school teams, mentoring several generations of athletes and teaching them the values of team sports and leadership.

His professional activities were always dedicated to the betterment of the fire department and the protection of his district. He was instrumental in maintaining the special fire tax, which keeps the doors open at Lucerne Volunteer Fire Department. Perhaps, Chief Robbins' greatest accomplishment of his career was the reorganization and consolidation of four fire districts into one, known now as the Northshore Fire Protection District. This district is one of the largest in California, covering more than 350 square miles.

Chief Robbins was born in San Francisco and went to high school in Upper Lake, California. He pursued his degree at Santa Rosa Junior College, taking many classes related to fire science and management of personnel.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I believe it is appropriate at this time that we recognize and honor James Charles Robbins for his career of fire protection and community leadership. We congratulate him on his retirement, and extend our best wishes for many years of health and happiness. His dedication to the safety and protection of Northern California is truly commendable, and his leadership will be missed.

HONORING KENNETH P. DOYLE

HON. ROBERT A. BRADY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 3, 2011

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Kenneth P. Doyle. For 36 years, Mr. Doyle has served as a Tipstaff for the First Judicial District, and in November he will celebrate his retirement after decades of service to his community.

Mr. Doyle's celebrated career began thirty-six years ago when on February 17, 1976, Ken was sworn in as a Tipstaff by then Administrative Judge Ethan Allen Doty. Mr. Doyle was first assigned to the Family Court Division at 1801 Vine Street, under the direction of Judge Gregory Lagakos before moving on to the Criminal and Civil Trial Division in first City Hall and for the last 15 plus years the Criminal Justice Center.

Mr. Doyle's knowledge of the court system has been an invaluable asset to both Courtroom Operations and the Judiciary as evidenced by his long successful stints with Judges' Paul Ribner, Theodore Smith, Ned Hirsch, Joyce Keane and most notably our current Administrative Judge D. Webster Keogh. The last seven plus years of Mr. Doyle's service have been as a supervisor for Courtroom Operations under Chief of Courtroom Operations, Michael P. Spaziano. Ken's knowledge and work ethic will be missed by the Courtroom Operations family, but his legacy will live on forever.

Mr. Doyle's long and impressive career showcases his commitment and service to his community. Mr. Speaker, I ask that you and my other distinguished colleagues join me in thanking Mr. Doyle for his work and congratulate him on the occasion of his retirement.

100TH ANNIVERSARY OF LINCOLNWOOD

HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 3, 2011

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 100th anniversary of Lincolnwood.

Not many cities can boast a more colorful start than Lincolnwood. A hundred years ago, the city came to be known as Tessville after a band of tavern owners incorporated the area to take advantage of a loophole during Prohibition that allowed organized municipalities to grant liquor licenses.

It was an unconventional way for a city to begin. Though not as infamous as its Midwestern counterpart Dodge City, Kansas a few decades prior, Tessville was also known for its speakeasies, saloons and gambling halls.

In the 1920s, under the helm of long-serving Mayor Henry Proesel, came an electric rail. With the electric rail came new ideas and prosperity.

Stricter liquor control laws were passed, and Tessville would become Lincolnwood—an ethnically diverse, popular community that offered fast access to and from Chicago, and good fortune for its residents.

Since then, Lincolnwood has had many proud moments—from the construction of a 1.5 million-gallon water tower to the election of Peter Moy, the first Asian American to serve any municipality in Illinois as its President.

Over the years, city efforts—including the Vision 2020 plan—have yielded improvement in repairing infrastructure, renovating city parks, and construction of new parkways.

Today, Lincolnwood is a vibrant community that still sports a strong business sector and a

diverse population. The city of Lincolnwood has much to be proud of and much to look forward to in the next 100 years. I am proud to serve as Congresswoman for Lincolnwood and wish its leaders, businesses and residents a happy 100th anniversary.

RECOGNIZING THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF SMC IN NOBLESVILLE, INDIANA

HON. DAN BURTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 3, 2011

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, in these tumultuous times, it is important to take the opportunity to highlight the successes of some businesses. One such business is SMC—a leader in industrial manufacturing whose U.S. headquarters is in my district in Noblesville, Indiana.

SMC's products have improved upon the ideas that have enabled manufacturers to operate efficiently for years. Recent innovations include a light-weight actuator that fits into older systems, allowing businesses to increase efficiency without a costly and complete system overhaul. A new SMC pump consumes less energy than its predecessor, but outlives it by 10 million pumps. Lastly, I believe their premium on face-time with customers enables their next innovation to be inspired by the very hard-working people that use them.

It is also worth noting that the company has partnered in some fashion with 38 countries across the globe. Their sales market connects them to almost 50 countries, affirming their stance that "products are not confined to the limits of conventional pneumatic control components, but are reaching out to cover peripheral markets as well."

These accomplishments have recently landed SMC on Forbes' list of the Top 100 Most Innovative Companies, sharing the list with industry leaders such as Apple, Google, and Amazon. Their core business policy of "Customer First and Quality First" has propelled the company forward. They should be applauded for such achievements and for their future. SMC, along with Mayor Ditslear and the people of Noblesville, no doubt are excited, as I certainly am.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 3, 2011

Mr. COFFMAN of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, today our national debt is \$14,977,962,674,363.87.

On January 6, 2009, the start of the 111th Congress, the national debt was \$10,638,425,746,293.80.

This means the national debt has increased by \$4,339,536,928,070.07 since then. This debt and its interest payments we are passing to our children and all future Americans.